

## BFF to get tough on discipline

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has decided to take a tough stance on the punishment of players for abusing or assaulting referees during professional football league matches. The recommendation, in principle, comes after a string of incidents recently where players abused/assaulted referees and got away with light punishment.

Recently, Sheikh Russel players Mamunul Islam and Mithun Chowhury were suspended for charging at the referee after their 1-0 defeat in the Grameenphone Bangladesh Premier League match against Mohammedan SC on February 9, which was considered as a light punishment. As a result, BFF president Kazi Salahuddin, after a meeting with the Referees' Committee yesterday, recommended increasing the penalty to Tk 50,000, and a five-match suspension in case of non-payment, which will be imposed on individual players rather than on the club.

Meanwhile, Salahuddin also informed that the trial held by national coach Lodewijk De Kruif recently in London failed to find any probable players for the national team. However, the coach is expected to run more programmes as such in Europe where there are contingents of expatriate Bangladeshis in search of quality players.

## Rahmatganj beat Agrani Bank

SPORTS REPORTER

Rahmatganj MFS outplayed Agrani Bank 3-1 in the Premier Bank Bangladesh Championship League at the Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday. Mohammad Rony put Rahmatganj ahead in the 7th minute and Nurul Afsar doubled the lead in the 61st minute. Sabbir Hossain added the third for Rahmatganj in the 83rd minute before Mohammad Shakil scored a consolation goal for Agrani Bank in the 89th minute.

The win gave Rahmatganj 3 points from 2 matches while Agrani Bank remained on one points.

## Make-or-break

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not be as bad, but we will look for all three points, even with the injury problems," said Maruf yesterday. "The opposition are tactically very strong, so we will have to guard our defence very well."

The first-leg match was won 1-0 by Sheikh Russel, courtesy of a headed goal from their Bosnian defender Bojan Petric. Today's match will start at 4:30 pm and satellite channel BTV World will beam the match live from the venue.

## I believed

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"We are not thinking of anything different in the next game. We don't want to take any more pressure. However, we need to improve on things like not losing wickets in the middle," he said.



Rafael Nadal celebrates his Brazil Open quarterfinal win against Carlos Berlocq at Ibirapuera Gymnasium in Sao Paulo on Friday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Nadal thru' to semis



AFP, Sao Paulo

Rafael Nadal advanced to the semifinals of the Brazil Open here late Friday, with a difficult three-set win over Argentine Carlos Berlocq.

The 26-year-old Spaniard, ranked number five in the world, won his singles quarterfinal match 3-6, 6-4, 6-4 in two hours 24 minutes against the 30-year old Argentine, ranked 78th in the world.

Nadal will face off in Saturday's semifinal against another Argentine, Martin Alund, who earlier Friday defeated Filippo Volandri of Italy 7-5, 7-6.

In another quarterfinal earlier Friday, Argentine David Nalbandian beat Spaniard Nicolas Almagro, the winner of the Brazil Open last year.

Nalbandian will contest Saturday's other semifinal against Italian Simone Bolelli who ousted Argentine Juan Monaco. Berlocq dominated the first set, breaking Nadal's serve twice before prevailing 6-3, and serving several aces during the match.

But the Spaniard, who enjoyed the raucous support of the crowd at Sao Paulo's Ibirapuera gymnasium, later said he never thought of losing the contest.

He added: "I was able to be solid with my serves and take advantage of the fact that he (Berlocq) did not return well" in

the third set.

Nadal, who is recovering from a knee injury, at times appeared a bit tentative but used powerful serves and brilliant drop shots to tame his opponent.

"For me every victory is important. It is the moment to have the necessary humility to fight in every match as I did today," he said.

"It's the first match I win in three sets here. It helps me get better physically, It helps me regain my self-confidence," Nadal added.

He is the top seed in this 455,775-dollar tournament, his second comeback event after a seven-month absence.

Last week, he competed in the Vina del Mar Open in Chile, losing the singles and doubles finals Sunday.

Nadal has claimed seven of his 11 Grand Slam titles on the clay courts of Roland Garros. He won the Brazil Open in 2005, when it was held in Costa do Sauipe in eastern Bahia state.

Last year, the tournament was moved to Sao Paulo.

The Brazil Open is part of the Latin American clay court circuit, along with the Vina del Mar event and the Mexico Open, in Acapulco, where Nadal plans to play later this month.

The three low-profile Latin American events are routinely ignored by the world's top three players: Novak Djokovic, Roger Federer and Andy Murray.

## 'Now we can look to the future'

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cricket and we are also looking to improve in T20 cricket with the T20 World Cup coming up," he added.

Together with the team management, Jurgensen has already set a plan for the tour of Sri Lanka, the camp for which will begin on February 20. "For the camp, we have got two dates, basically the guys whose BPL is finished they will report on the 20th. The guys who are playing in the second round of the BPL can come by the 24th. They will go home, take a break but then come back for a really good day's work. After that, we go to Sri Lanka and acclimatise to their conditions," said Jurgensen.

He also stated that he, along with the National Cricket Academy (NCA) had a special set-up with the pacers. "Last few weeks we have had good support from the NCA. We targeted eight bowlers that could

be in the final squad and they have been in the academy to see (fitness trainer) Stuart Karppinen. The key is that they need to be bowling their overs. If they bowl their overs they will be fine," he said. He further added that there were chances to witness a few new faces in the upcoming tour, an aspect that will be judged based on the domestic performances of the players.

Sri Lanka have an indomitable record at home and it was an aspect that Jurgensen said he was ready for. When asked about a realistic target for the series, he said "I won't answer that question. At the moment I obviously want us to win. We need to have that attitude, we need to put ourselves in a position to win. For the moment, we need to let our past records go and play the best we can. If we get the process right we will win. That's how I'll be approaching it."

## Newlands nicely poised

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have been upheld.

Azhar and first innings centurion Younis Khan battled through some testing bowling against Steyn, Philander and Morkel.

Bowling downwind in his second spell, Steyn was timed at more than 146kmh and troubled both batsmen before Younis, forced on to the back foot, chopped the ball into his stumps.

After being dismissed without scoring in the first innings, Misbah took 18 balls to score his first runs in the second innings.

Scoring slowed to a crawl, with left-arm spinner Peterson conceding only four runs in his first eight overs.

But Misbah gained in confidence, three times hitting Peterson for six as he advanced to 36 not out. Azhar was unbeaten on 45.

Overnight batsmen AB de Villiers and Dean Elgar started South Africa's recovery when they took their sixth-wicket stand to 55 before Elgar was caught at slip off Saeed Ajmal for 22.

At that stage off-spinner Ajmal had taken all six wickets but he had no further success, finishing with six for 96.

## Taskin seals it for Kings

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The right-arm pacer removed Zimbabwean Charles Coventry and Australian Simon Katich in his very first over, the second over of the innings, and then took the wicket of Jahurul Islam as Rajshahi were reduced to 23 for three. Rajshahi, who made it to the last four by virtue of a better head-to-head record against Rangpur Riders and Barisal Burners, failed to bounce back from this early hiccup and ultimately finished their quota with 107 for seven.

Sean Ervine played an unbeaten knock of 47 that came from 48 deliveries. The Zimbabwean's innings might have helped his side to cross the 100-run mark but it was in no way an adequate total to defend.

After Taskin, spinner Mahmudullah Riyad also played his part to harm Rajshahi's chance of posting a challenging total.

Riyad sent back Farhad Hosain and the dashing Ziaur Rahman in the 12th over to kill Rajshahi's last hope.

## Federer all for squash in Olympics

AFP, Rotterdam

Roger Federer will support the campaign to have squash included in the 2020 Olympics, after meeting the sport's longtime number one Nicol David at the Rotterdam World Tennis tournament.

Federer made his endorsement only a few days after the International Olympic Committee said it would remove wrestling from the Games.

## 4 top seeds reach last 4

AFP, San Jose

Two-time defending champion Milos Raonic rolled to a straight set quarterfinal victory 7-6 (7/0), 6-3 over Denis Istomin at the ATP Tour's SAP Open on Friday night.

The 22-year-old Raonic hammered 14 aces and needed just 80 minutes to oust Istomin in a rematch of last year's final which was also won by the Canadian.

Raonic, who is seeded No. 1 for the first time at an ATP event in his career, advances to the semifinals where he will face third seeded American Sam Querrey who needed three sets to eliminate Alejandro Falla of Colombia 6-3, 4-6, 7-5.

All four top seeds are through to the semifinals as US second seed John Isner and German fourth seed Tommy Haas also advanced Friday with straight-set wins.

## LONDON OLYMPICS Useless B'ball Arena on sale

AFP, London

The distinctive outer shell of the London 2012 Olympics Basketball Arena is being put on the market because no use has been found for the temporary building so far, The Times newspaper reported Saturday.

Barr Construction, which built the arena, is seeking expressions of interest by March 31 for the steel and PVC-moulded structure that some compared to a mattress or a cake with icing on, thanks to its white, ripple-effect appearance.

There had been speculation that it could be shipped to Rio de Janeiro to be used there for the 2016 Games, or converted into a national tennis academy in Scotland.

However, the building is still without a future and is up for sale for 2.5 million pounds, The Times reported.

The Basketball Arena was one of the largest-ever temporary venues built for any Games, and came in within the 43 million pound budget.

The frame of 20 steel arches is wrapped in fabric to form the canvas for a lighting display.

The shell does not come with the 12,000-seat tiered venue inside.

## Oscar, the star made by his late mother!



AFP, Paris

Oscar Pistorius, who is facing a charge of premeditated murder of his girlfriend, might never have achieved his hero status in South Africa had it not been for his late mother Sheila.

The 26-year-old last year became the first double amputee to compete in the Olympics, but only after a long battle with athletics governing body the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) had seen him prevail.

While his then 89-year-old grandmother was in the stands to watch his moment of history when he competed in the 400 metres in London, Pistorius said afterwards he would probably never have bothered to persist in his desire to compete at the Games had he not taken on board some of his mother's principles.

His mother and father had taken the traumatic decision for Pistorius to have both his legs amputated below the knee before he was one, because of a congenital condition.

"I thought about my mother a lot today," said Pistorius, who was devastated when she died in 2002, after his Olympic run.

"She was a bit of a hardcore person. She didn't take no for an answer.

"She always said the loser isn't the person that gets involved and comes last but it's the person that doesn't get involved in the first place."

Pistorius, who has had little contact with his father Henke since his parents divorced when he was a young boy -- although he was in court on Friday when

## U-16 meet sans Sk Jamal



SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club, one of the biggest clubs in the local football circuit, have decided not to participate in the inaugural edition of the U-16 Football Tournament, citing their lack of preparedness for such a competition. Abdul Gaffer, representative of the Dhanmondi giants, relayed the information to the Professional League Committee chairman Abdus Salam Murshedy during the meeting at Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) House yesterday where it was decided that the tournament will kick off with the U-16 squads of the eight clubs that par-

ticipate in the Premier League.

Murshedy informed that measures will be taken against Sheikh Jamal DC according to the league by-laws, which may include financial as well as other penalties, for their non-participation in the league. The league, comprising eight teams divided into two groups, will begin on February 20 and conclude by the first week of March. Three venues, including the Bangabandhu National Stadium and Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium, will be used for the tournament.

Winners will be given Tk 50,000, runners-up will get Tk 25,000 while there will also be cash rewards for the top-scorer and most valuable player. Each team will get Tk 50,000 as participation money, it was revealed.



BFF officials brief reporters about the U-16 Football Tournament, which will kick off on February 20, at the BFF House yesterday.

PHOTO: COURTESY

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

- "Grey's Anatomy" network
- Facebook contribution
- Undergoes recession
- Carnival city
- Arthur of tennis
- Portrayal
- Place to find a rake
- Cheer
- Bart's sis
- Keep tabs on
- Tureen accessory
- Authoritative order
- Oodles
- Diamond-back, e.g.
- Present
- Stinky
- Praise in verse
- False teeth
- Unaccompanied
- Make one's way

36 "Annie Hall" director

- Yuletide rendition
- "Buenos —"
- On
- Annoy for
- one's own amusement
- Young horse
- Initial chip
- Conk out
- TV trophy
- Require
- Kreskin's claim

2 Story of a lifetime?

- Lose warmth
- Old hat
- Job safety org.
- Yon maiden
- A Kennedy brother
- Mistakes in print
- Galosh
- United nations
- Eve's third son
- Bouncy melody
- Hospital section

20 Come to earth

- Lotion additive
- Celebrated with a bash
- Eye part
- Gull's cousin
- Cabana's location
- Not working
- Noble gas
- Coal or gas
- Doubly thick
- Cabbage salad
- Wasn't well
- Eatery
- Teeny bit
- Wander
- Be overly fond of
- Enthusiast
- Individual
- "— the season ..."
- With it, once

DOWN

- Illustrations

Solution time: 25 mins.

Friday's answer 1-4

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14		
15			16				17			
		18				19				
20	21				22	23				
24				25				26	27	28
29				30				31		
32			33				34			
		35				36				
37	38	39			40					
41				42	43			44	45	
46				47				48		
49				50				51		

## CRYPTOQUIP

U I R K E S Y I K O B I P V O P W I C M  
S L I R V S C H C Y P O E H L K G  
Q O P V H K O B S V Y J I Q W I H K L O  
V H V K O E " S C G V J H C M M P I U W " ?

Friday's Cryptoquip: THE MASSEUR PERIODICALLY USES THE CLEVER ADVERTISING SLOGAN "MAY I HAVE YOUR TENSION, PLEASE?"

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Q equals F